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TESTIMONY ON HJ 49

**BEFORE THE SENATE NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY
COMMITTEE**

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Montana's rural electric cooperatives support HJ 49 as the logical next step related to distributed generation.

Two bills expanding net metering were heard in the house and were tabled in committee for legitimate reasons. HJ 49, if passed, would have an interim committee address the issues such as safety. The committee would seek workable solutions and who should pay increased operating cost related to interconnection. Investor-owned utilities are mandated to net meter and rural electric cooperatives all have policies allowing net metering.

The cooperative I manage, Park Electric Cooperative, has been interconnected with wind and small hydropower generation units since the early '80s and know there are real impacts to a distribution utility that is interconnecting.

I have heard the safety issue referred to as a red herring because nobody has died as a result of the increased risk. I find that to be an offensive and absurd assertion. No one had died in Montana from laboratory testing of high voltage breakers – that is, until last year when a lineman in Montana died utilizing equipment that was supposedly foolproof.

Please support HJ 49 without amendments. Its purpose is to address safety and other issues that restrict expanded net metering.